

# Letters to the Editor

## Sovereignty is a vague goal

The sovereignty movement grows in stature each day among the native Hawaiians. Native Hawaiian activists rightfully point out that the American government has acknowledged that it illegally overthrew the native Hawaiian monarchy.

There are those who would turn the clock back to re-establish native Hawaiian governance. But the question arises as to how much sovereignty is enough.

Recently, one native Hawaiian activist, who would secede Hawaii from the union, claimed that he is descended from the royal class. An acknowledged member of the former royal family retorted that the activist is just a commoner. The native Hawaiian aristocracy was not amused.

This raises an interesting question. In our efforts to grant the native Hawaiian people self-determination through a vaguely stated goal of achieving "sovereignty," are we willing to go back in time and restore the monarchy?

There seems to be a romantic, nostalgic yearning for the restoration of native Hawaiian governance, but I question if restoring the monarchy is practical. I question if the restoration of the monarchy, and having Hawaii secede from the union is a goal desired by native Hawaiians.

I'm not native Hawaiian, but it seems to me that America's representative democracy, and postindustrial Information Age economy offers many practical advantages to the native Hawaiian commoner. Just think of all the illegal immigrants who try to smuggle themselves across the border as a practical example.

Remember that in 1893, the Kingdom of Hawaii was beset by a number of problems and political turmoil. Those who point out

Spanish legal system which they disliked.

The former Americans established the Republic of Texas, whose system of government was modeled after American federalist representative democracy. Later, Texas became a part of the United States. In Hawaii, former Americans merely duplicated the process.

The Americans in the 19th century believed in the expansionistic doctrine of Manifest Destiny. American historians in the 20th century write as if the doctrine of Manifest Destiny is now no longer applicable, but how many would argue about the chauvinistic notion that the American

people are a truly special people who are destined to ultimately rule vast expanses of the planet? Americans do influence much of the world's activities today and are quite proud of that fact.

Remember that in 1893, the Kingdom of Hawaii consisted of more than peoples of native Hawaiian and former American descent. I'm Chinese. Where does this mentality leave my people? There were Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, French, English, etc. living in the Kingdom of Hawaii as well.

I understand the need for a feeling of native Hawaiian nationalism. Certainly, if the native Hawaiian people want to

form a nation-within-a-nation like the native American Indians talking about the glories of beating General Custer at Little Bighorn, therefore they should take on the 101st Airborne Division.

The mantra of "achieving sovereignty" appears to be a deliberately vague goal designed to attract multiple bases of support. The fact of the matter is that native Hawaiian people cannot agree among themselves about what their ultimate objective is. Certainly, the political spectrum is broad.

Don't forget that we are all Americans.

— Mike G.H. Chun  
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that the monarchy was illegally overthrown are correct. Also, remember that a republic was ultimately set up to replace the royal aristocracy, which was governed by the people of Hawaii as a nation. Years later, the Republic of Hawaii was accepted by the United States as a territory through the Organic Act. Ultimately, all that the United States did was to bring democracy to a backwards monarchy.

It's true that most of the haoles who overthrew the monarchy were former Americans who were citizens of the Kingdom of Hawaii. But then, Americans have brought progressive government and democracy wherever they have gone. For example, former Americans colonized Texas and eventually overthrew the native Mexican government because it started no public schools, would not allow the Texans to worship as they wished, and provided a